101-532

Public Law 101-532
101st Congress

Joint Resolution

Nov. 7, 1990
[H.J. Res. 669]

To salute and congratulate the people of Poland as they commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of the adoption of the Polish Constitution on May 3, 1991.

Whereas, the Polish Constitution of 1791 was designed to protect Poland's sovereignty and national unity, and replaced a feudal system of rule in Poland with a progressive constitutional monarchy;

Whereas, the Polish Constitution secured individual freedom for all persons in Poland and guaranteed religious tolerance by assuring "to all persuasions and religions freedom and liberty", and formed a government composed of three distinct powers: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial, while declaring that "all power in civil society should be derived from the will of the people";

Whereas, the Polish Constitution revitalized the parliamentary system by placing preeminent lawmaking power in a House of Deputies, by subjecting the legislative Diet to majority rule, and by granting the Diet the power to remove ministers, appoint commissars, and choose magistrates;

Whereas, the Polish Constitution provided for significant economic, social, and political reforms for its time by removing inequalities between the nobility and bourgeois, recognizing town residents as "freemen" that had judicial autonomy and expanded rights, and extending the protection of law to the peasantry, which previously had no recourse against the arbitrary action of feudal lords; and

Whereas, the principles of the Polish Constitution endured and became the symbol around which a powerful new national consciousness was born, helping the Polish nation to survive long periods of misfortune over the next two centuries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the people of the United States of America salute and congratulate the people of Poland as they commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of the adoption of the Polish Constitution on May 3, 1991, and recognize that Poland's rebirth as a free nation is supported by the legacy of the Polish Constitution of 1791;

SEC. 2. The Library of Congress is authorized and directed to commemorate this anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

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SEC. 3. The President of the United States is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the Governors of the several States, the chief officials of local governments, and the people of the United States to observe this anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Approved November 7, 1990.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 669:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 136 (1990):
Oct. 16, considered and passed House.
Oct. 17, considered and passed Senate.

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